



# BANDA BAHADUR

A VALIANT SIKH WARRIOR

Vol 734 |

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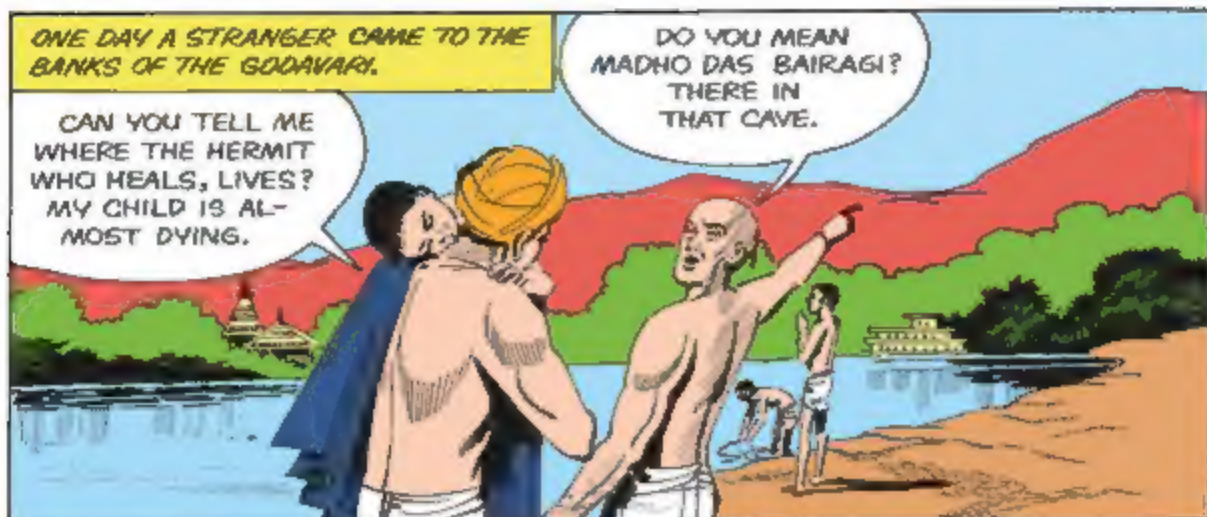
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# BANDA BAHADUR



IN THE YEAR 1708 A.D., THERE LIVED IN A CAVE, BY THE BANKS OF THE RIVER GODAVARI, A HERMIT CALLED MADHO DAS. NO ONE KNEW MUCH ABOUT HIM EXCEPT THAT HE WAS A RAJPUT FROM JAMMU, WHOSE FIRST NAME HAD BEEN LACHMAN, WHICH HE CHANGED TO MADHO DAS WHEN HE BECAME A HERMIT.



MADHO DAS BAIRAGI THROUGH THE PRACTICE OF YOGA HAD ACQUIRED MIRACULOUS POWERS.



BABAJI,  
SAVE MY  
HUSBAND.



BABA, I AM  
MARRIED SEVEN  
YEARS BUT I DON'T  
HAVE A CHILD.

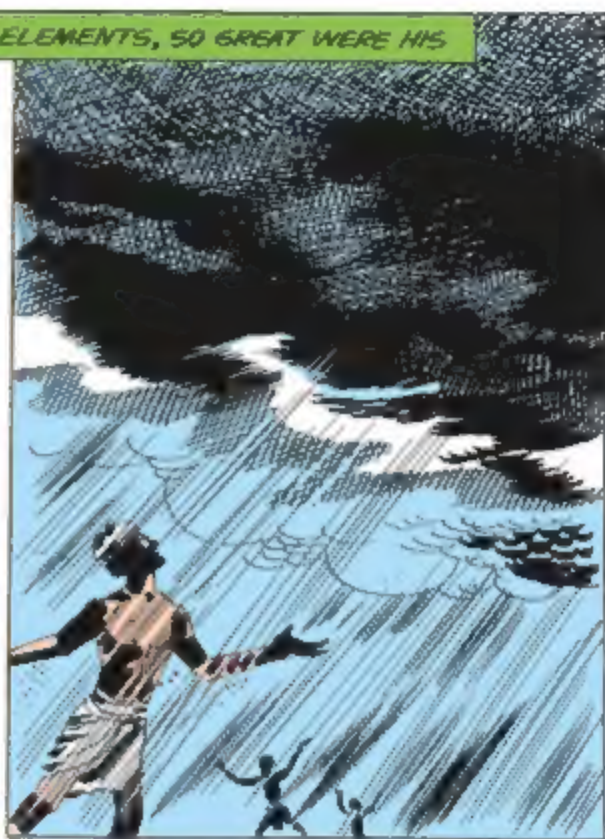
GO IN PEACE,  
WOMAN. THE LORD  
SHALL SOON  
BLESS YOU  
WITH ONE.



BABA! THERE HAS BEEN  
NO RAIN. OUR CROPS ARE  
WITHERING. THERE WILL  
BE A FAMINE.

MADHO DAS COULD EVEN CONTROL THE ELEMENTS, SO GREAT WERE HIS MIRACULOUS POWERS.

DO NOT FEAR,  
DEAR FARMERS.  
YOU SHALL SOON  
HAVE RAIN.



THE FIELDS WERE GREEN ONCE MORE AND THE FARMERS REJOICED.

BABAJI  
KI JAI!

BABAJI  
KI JAI!

BABAJI  
KI JAI!



ONE DAY WHEN MADHO DAS WAS DEEP IN MEDITATION, A VISITOR CAME INTO HIS CAVE.



THE HERMIT WAS IN A RAGE.

HOW  
DARE YOU  
DISTURB  
ME WHEN  
I AM AT  
PRAYER?  
WHO ARE  
YOU?

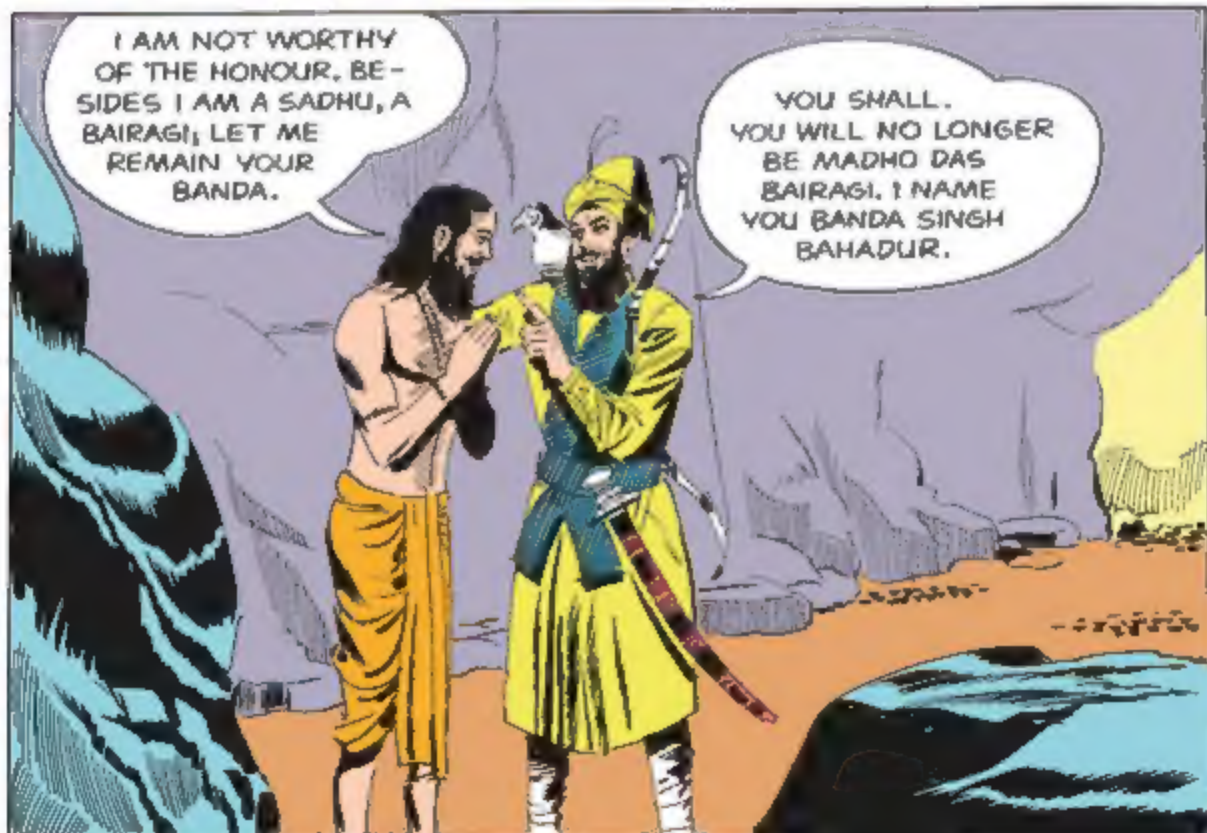


THE VISITOR  
WAITED TILL  
MADHO DAS  
HAD CALMED  
DOWN.  
THEN—

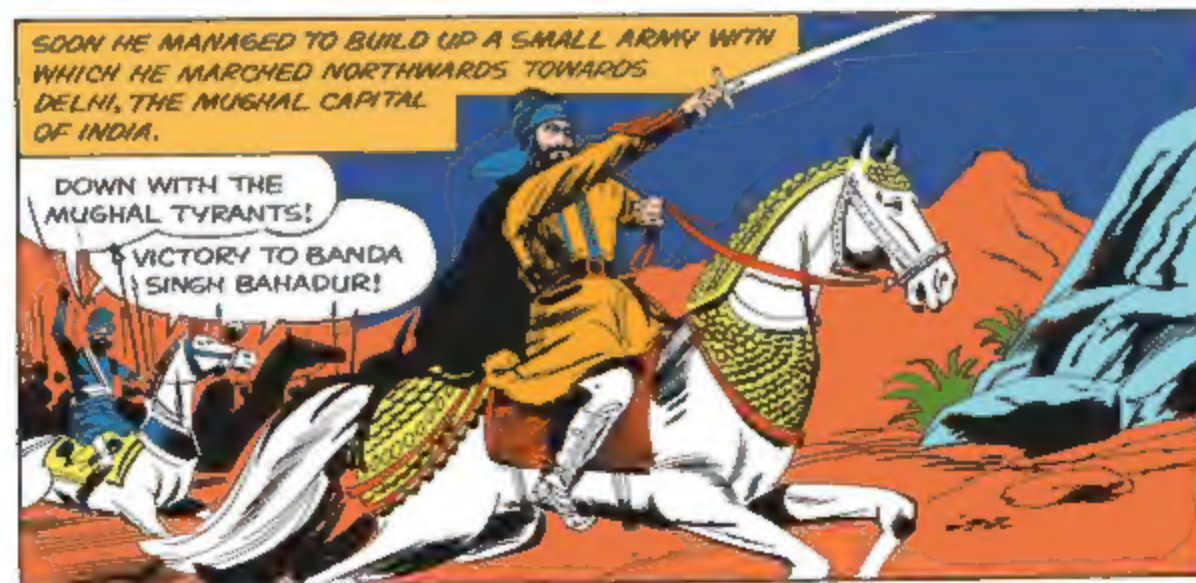
I AM WHO  
I AM.  
YOU KNOW  
WHO I AM.



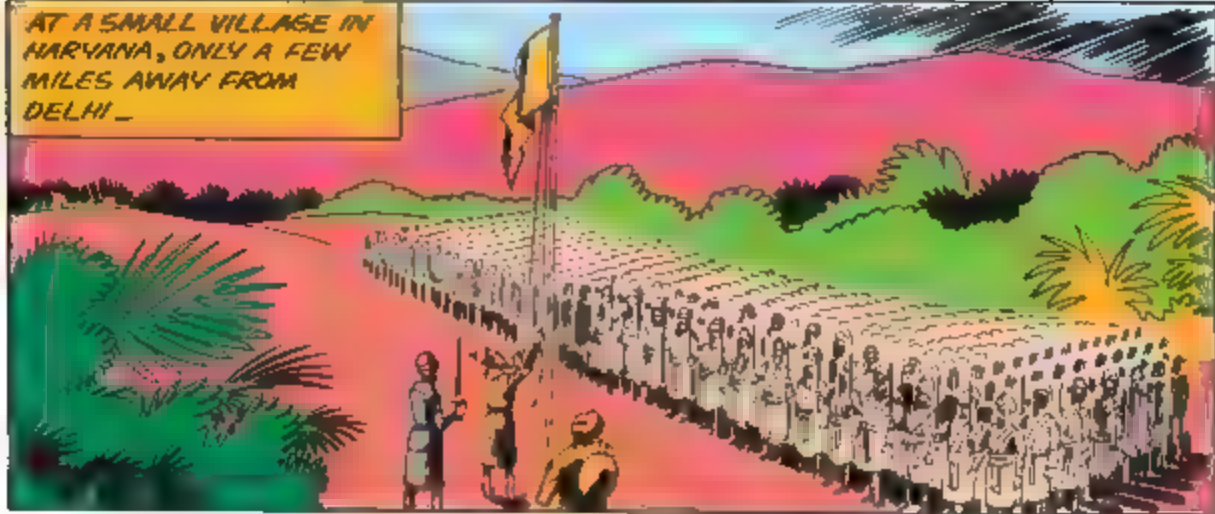
IN A FLASH MADHO DAS REALISED THAT THE INTRUDER WAS NONE OTHER THAN GURU GOBIND SINGH OF THE KHALSA.







AT A SMALL VILLAGE IN  
HARYANA, ONLY A FEW  
MILES AWAY FROM  
DELHI -



SUDDENLY A MESSENGER FROM GURU GOBIND  
SINGH'S CAMP AT NANDED, ON THE GODAVARI,  
RAN UP TO THEM.

LEADER OF THE  
KHALSA! THE GURU  
IS NO MORE. HE HAS  
BEEN MURDERED.  
BEFORE HE DIED  
HE SAID TO REMIND  
YOU THAT THE  
WAR AGAINST  
TYRANNY MUST  
GO ON.



BANDA IN THE MIDST OF HIS  
GRIEF TOOK AN OATH.

ON THE  
GURU'S SWORD  
I PLEDGE TO  
DESTROY THE  
MURDERERS OF  
THE GURU AND  
HIS SONS.



HIS SOLDIERS, AS WELL AS THE CROWD OF ONLOOKERS, ROARED WITH APPROVAL AND BANDA CALLED UPON THEM TO SUPPORT THE CAUSE.

YE SONS OF THE PUNJAB, IN THE NAME OF THE GREAT GURU RISE AND HELP ME DESTROY THE MUGHAL TYRANTS.

BANDA  
BAHADUR  
KI JAI!

BANDA  
BAHADUR  
KI JAI!

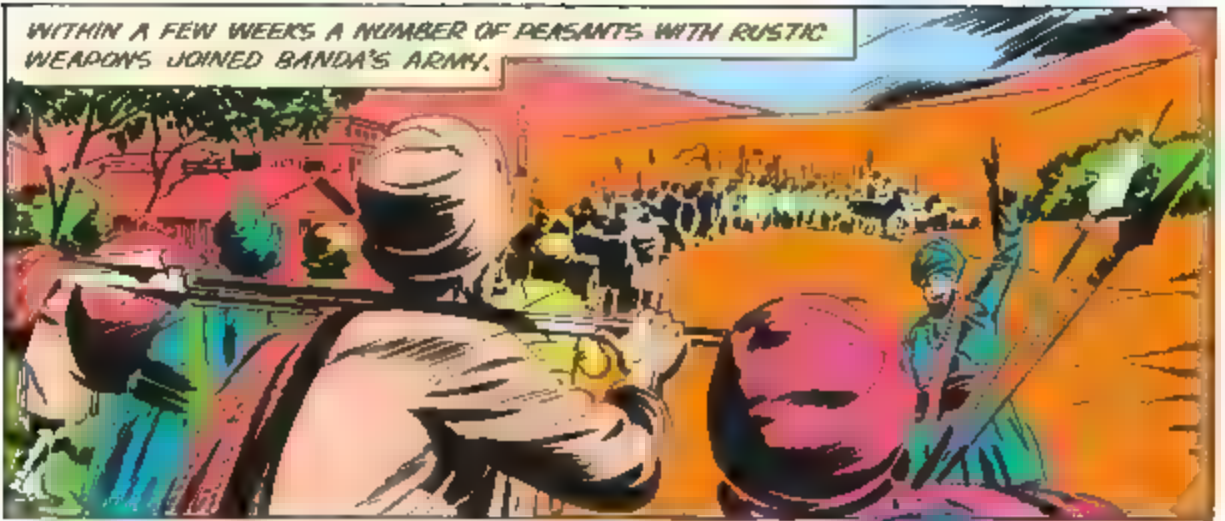
HE WENT FROM VILLAGE TO VILLAGE PROCLAIMING THE MESSAGE OF GURU GOBIND SINGH.

JAI  
GURU  
GOBIND!

JAI  
BANDA  
BAHADUR!

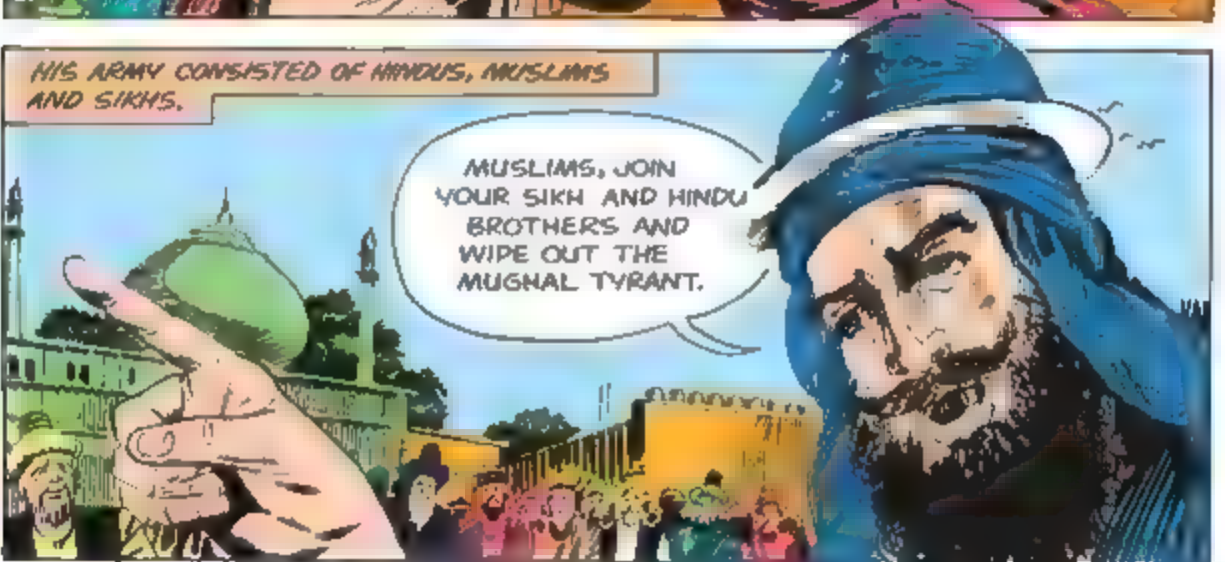
BANDA BAHADUR, SLAVE OF GOBIND SINGH, GURU OF THE KHALSA OFFERS PROTECTION TO ANYONE THREATENED BY THIEVES OR DACOITS OR TROUBLED BY MUGHALS, OR IN ANY WAY SUBJECTED TO INJUSTICE OR ILL TREATMENT.

WITHIN A FEW WEEKS A NUMBER OF PEASANTS WITH RUSTIC WEAPONS JOINED BANDA'S ARMY.



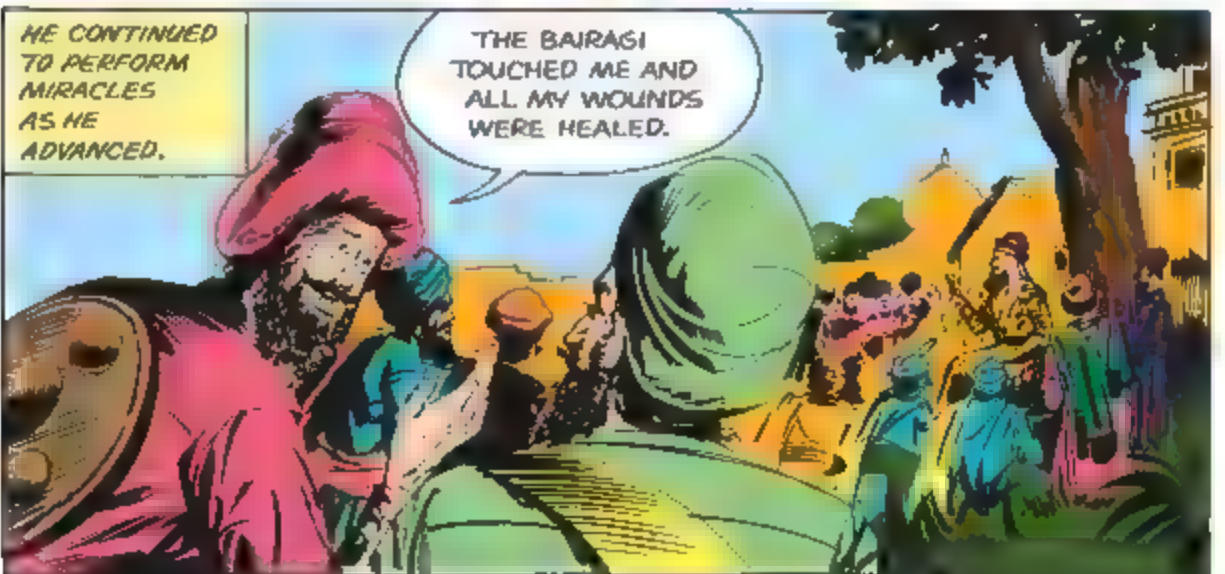
HIS ARMY CONSISTED OF HINDUS, MUSLIMS AND SIKHS.

MUSLIMS, JOIN  
YOUR SIKH AND HINDU  
BROTHERS AND  
WIPE OUT THE  
MUGHAL TYRANT.

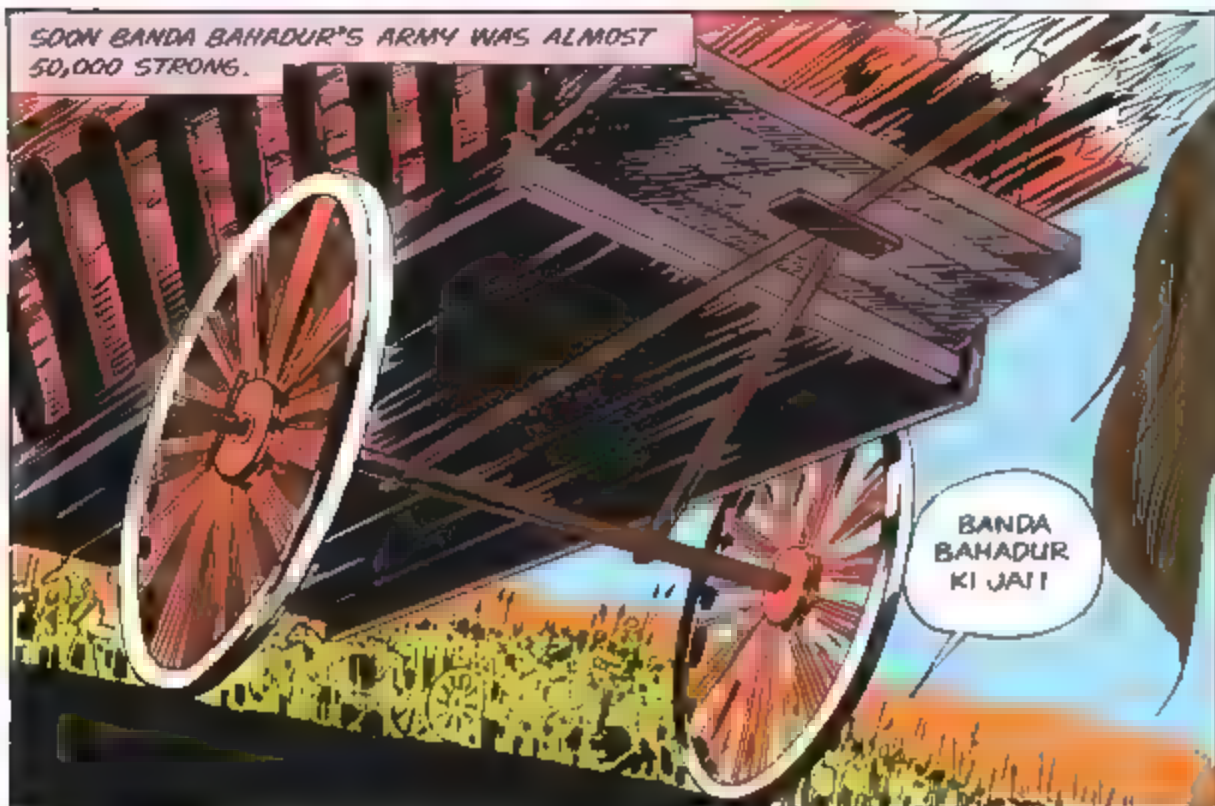


HE CONTINUED  
TO PERFORM  
MIRACLES  
AS HE  
ADVANCED.

THE BAIRAGI  
TOUCHED ME AND  
ALL MY WOUNDS  
WERE HEALED.

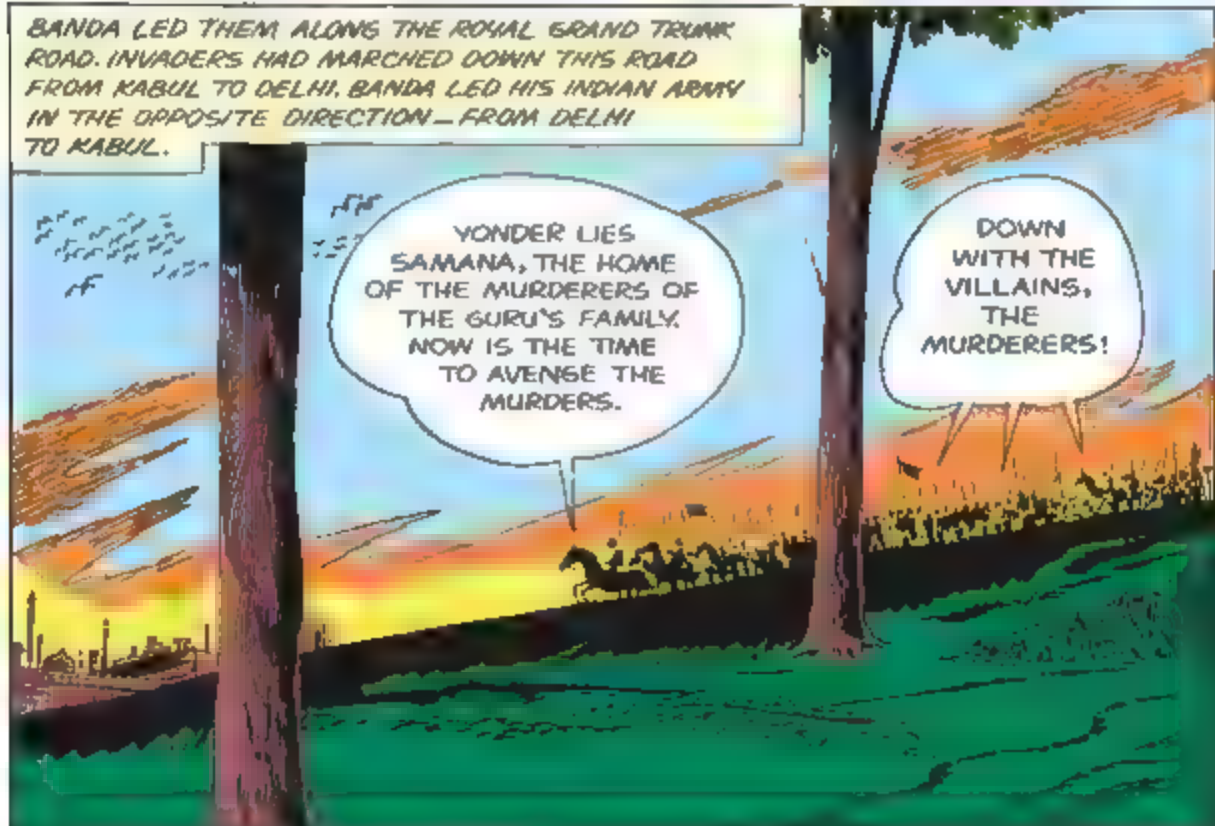


SOON BANDA BAHADUR'S ARMY WAS ALMOST 50,000 STRONG.



BANDA  
BAHADUR  
KI JAI!

BANDA LED THEM ALONG THE ROYAL GRAND TRUNK ROAD. INVADERS HAD MARCHED DOWN THIS ROAD FROM KABUL TO DELHI. BANDA LED HIS INDIAN ARMY IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION—FROM DELHI TO KABUL.



VONDER LIES  
SAMANA, THE HOME  
OF THE MURDERERS OF  
THE GURU'S FAMILY.  
NOW IS THE TIME  
TO AVENGE THE  
MURDERS.

DOWN  
WITH THE  
VILLAINS,  
THE  
MURDERERS!

BANDA DREW THE SWORD GURU GOBIND HAD GIVEN HIM AND LED THE ASSAULT ON SAMANA.



THE MUSLIMS OF SAMANA RAINED CANNON FIRE ON BANDA'S MEN, BUT A FEW OF THEM MANAGED TO SCALE THE WALLS.



ONCE INSIDE THE CITY THEY FOUGHT THEIR WAY TO THE CITY GATE AND...



...THREW IT OPEN.



THE SIKH CAVALRY  
THEN CHARGED IN,  
LED BY BANDA  
BAHADUR.



SAMANA WAS  
TAKEN AND THE  
PERSECUTORS  
OF THE GURU'S  
FAMILY WERE  
CAPTURED.



BANDA THEN  
TURNED TO  
HIS MEN.

YOU SHALL  
DECIDE THE FATE  
OF THESE  
MURDERERS.

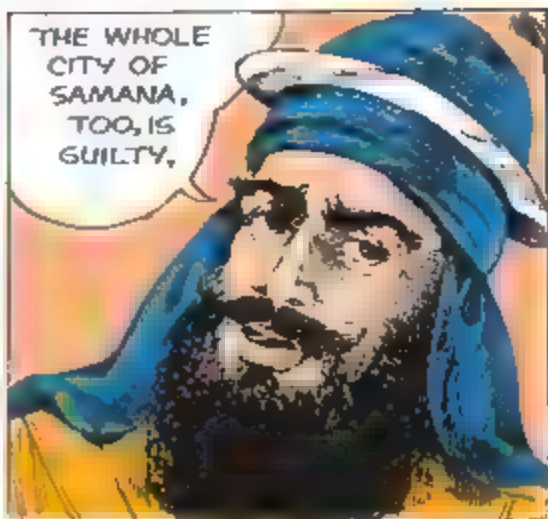
THEY  
MUST  
DIE.



AND FORTHWITH THE SENTENCE WAS CARRIED OUT.



THE WHOLE  
CITY OF  
SAMANA,  
TOO, IS  
GUILTY,



WHAT SHALL  
WE DO WITH  
THE CITY?

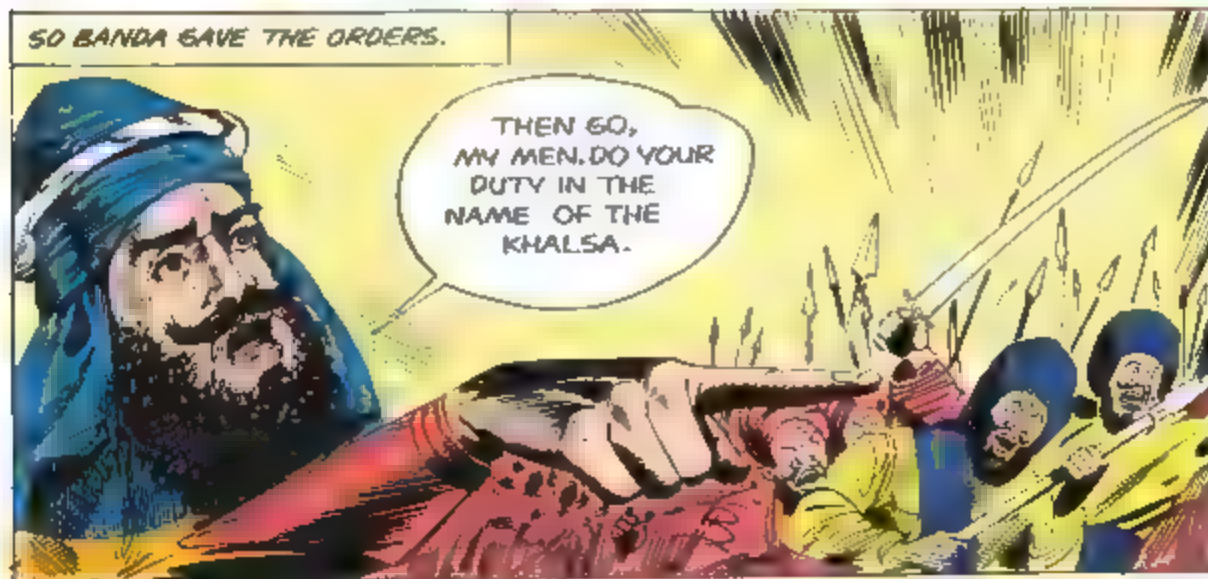
BURN  
IT!

DESTROY IT!



SO BANDA GAVE THE ORDERS.

THEN GO,  
MY MEN. DO YOUR  
DUTY IN THE  
NAME OF THE  
KHALSA.



THE CITY OF SAMANA WAS RAZED TO THE GROUND.



WHEN THE TASK WAS OVER BANDA SPOKE TO HIS MEN.

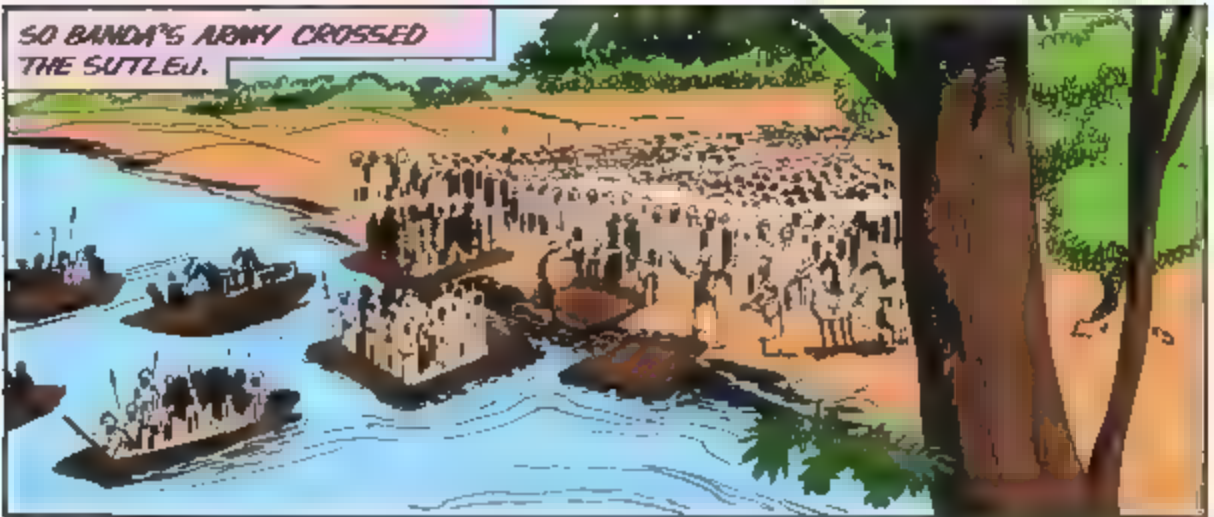
NOW TO SIRHIND! KHALSA SOLDIERS, DO YOU KNOW WHO KILLED THE TWO OTHER SONS OF GURU GOBIND AND ORDERED THE ASSASSINATION OF OUR GURU?

DON'T WE KNOW! IT WAS WAZIR KHAN THE GOVERNOR OF SIRHIND! DEATH TO HIM.

LET US NOT TARRY A MOMENT.



SO BANDA'S ARMY CROSSED  
THE SUTLEJ.



ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RIVER, WAZIR KHAN'S ARMY OF AFGHANS,  
PATHANS AND MUGHALS AWAITED THEM.



AS BANDA'S  
MEN FELL  
INTO BATTLE  
ARRAY HE  
ENCOURAGED  
THEM.

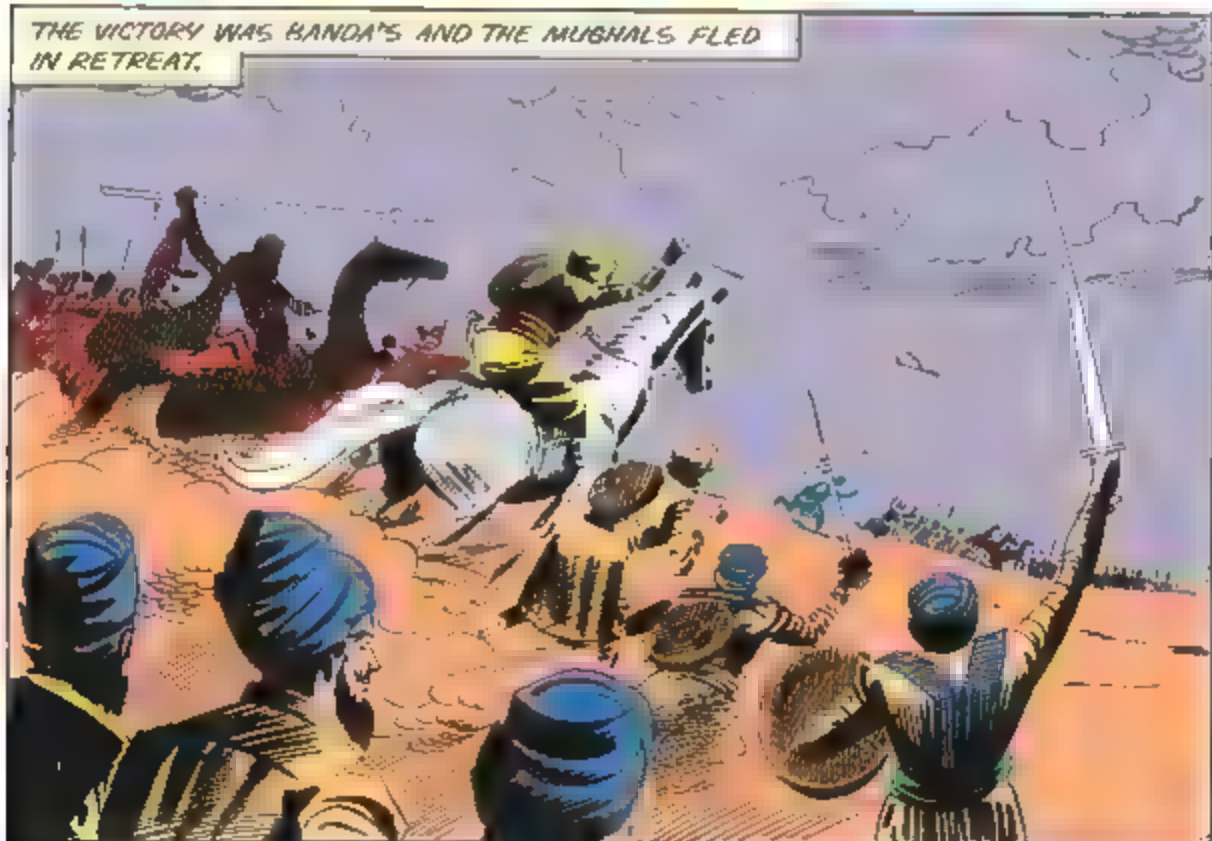


WE ARE UP AGAINST  
THE MOST POWERFUL  
ARMY IN INDIA. BUT I HAVE  
FAITH IN MY MEN. FIGHT  
FOR ALL YOU ARE WORTH.  
MAY THE GURU GRANT  
US VICTORY.

AND SO THE BLOODY BATTLE OF SIRHIND WAS FOUGHT  
ON MAY 24, 1710.



THE VICTORY WAS HANDA'S AND THE MUGHALS FLED  
IN RETREAT.



BANDA'S JUBILANT ARMY SLAUGHTERED THE HAPLESS MUGHALS.

NOT A MAN IN THE ARMY OF WAZIR KHAN ESCAPED WITH MORE THAN HIS LIFE AND THE CLOTHES HE STOOD IN. HORSEMEN AND FOOTMEN FELL UNDER THE SWORD OF THE INFIDELS.



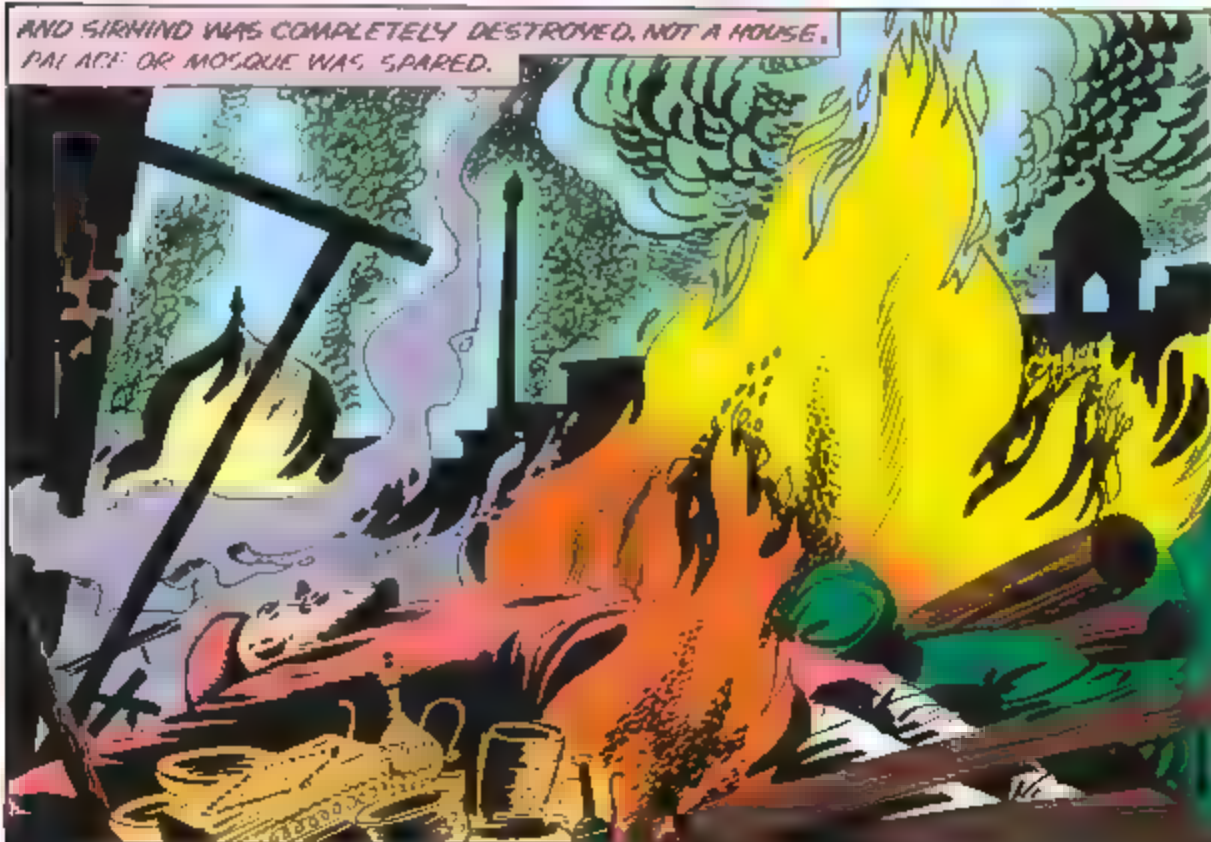
SIRHIND MET WITH A WORSE FATE THAN SAMANA.

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH THIS FORSAKEN CITY?

DESTROY IT TO THE LAST BRICK.



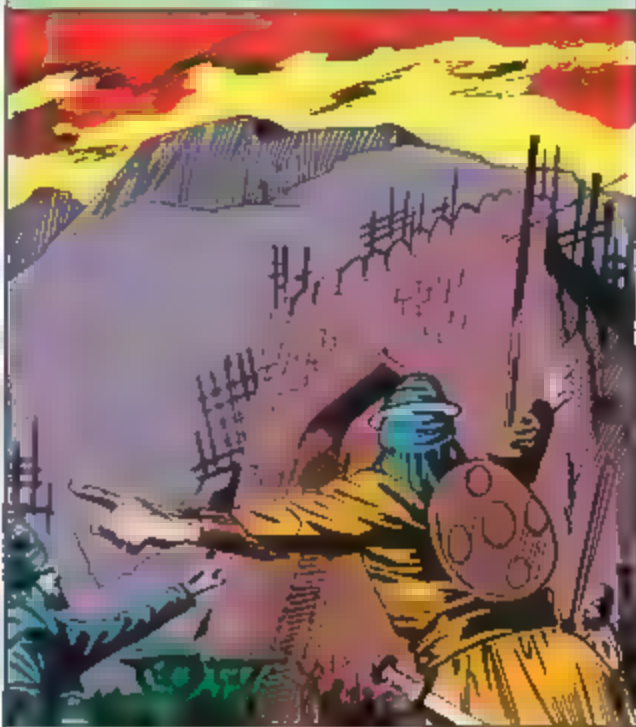
AND SIRHIND WAS COMPLETELY DESTROYED, NOT A HOUSE, PALACE OR MOSQUE WAS SPARED.



WHEN IT WAS ALL OVER...

THE MUGHAL EMPEROR  
IS BOUND TO TAKE ACTION.  
IT WILL BE WISE FOR  
US TO RETREAT  
TO THE FOOTHILLS.

SO HE LED HIS ARMY TO MUKHLISGARH  
WHERE THEY BEGAN BUILDING A FORT.



WHEN THE FORT WAS  
COMPLETED BANDA WAS  
CROWNED KING.

BANDA  
BAHADUR KI  
JAI!

BANDA  
BAHADUR KI  
JAI!



BANDA HAD COINED STRUCK IN THE NAME OF KHALSA COMMONWEALTH WITH THE THREE EMBLEMS OF THE GURU - "DEGH" "TEGH" AND "FATEH." THE "DEGH" FOR THE CAULDRON OF THE GURU'S KITCHEN WHERE FOOD WAS DISTRIBUTED FREE, THE "TEGH" FOR THE SWORD USED AGAINST THE TYRANTS, AND "FATEH" FOR VICTORY.

BUT THIS ACT OF BANDA'S CREATED DISCORD AMONG HIS MEN.



BANDA'S FOLLOWING WAS SOON DIVIDED. THOSE WHO REMAINED LOYAL TO HIM WERE THE BANDAI KHALSA.



THOSE WHO DESERTED HIM WERE THE TAT KHALSA.



IN THE MEANWHILE, AT DELHI, BAHADUR SHAH THE MUGHAL KING WAS UPSET TO HEAR OF THE FATE OF SAMANA AND SIRHIND.



BAHAOUR SHAH APPOINTED HIS ABLEST COMMANDER FEROTZE KHAN TO LEAD THE EXPEDITION AGAINST BANDA.

GET THAT SCOUNDREL DEAD OR ALIVE. GOD BE WITH YOU.

FEROTZE KHAN ARRIVED AT MUKHLISGARH AND SURROUNDED THE FORT.

FEROTZE KHAN THEN GAVE HIS ORDERS.

LET NO ONE GET OUT OF THE FORT. WE'LL STARVE THEM TO DEATH OR INTO SURRENDER.

INSIDE MUKHLISGARH...

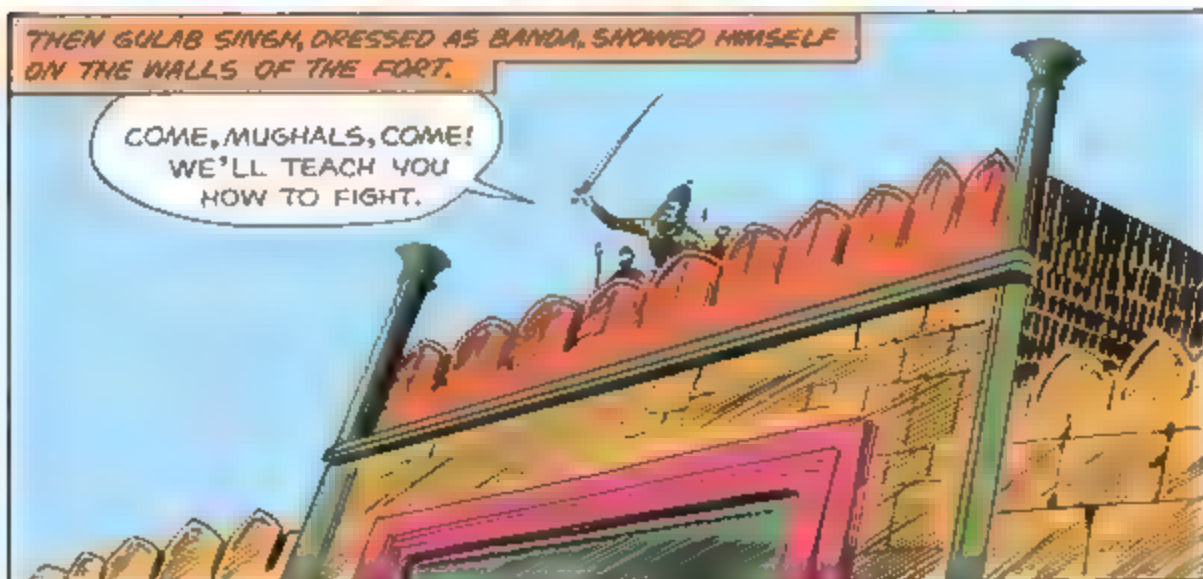
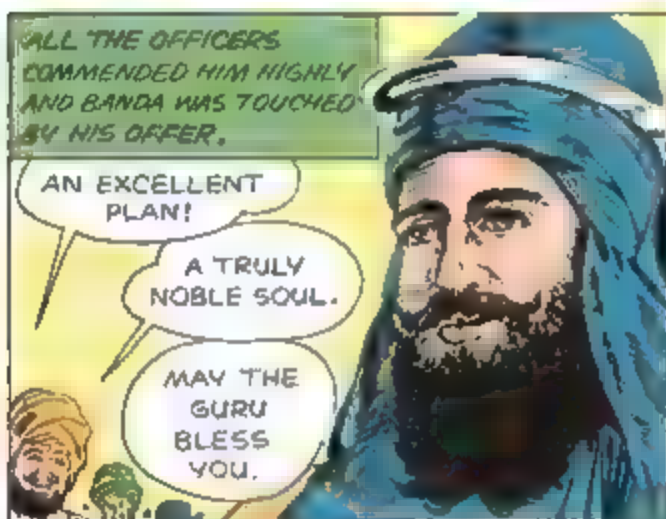
OUR SOLDIERS HAVE NOT EATEN FOR MANY DAYS. THEY HAVE BECOME WEAK.

COME WHAT MAY. WE SHALL NEVER SURRENDER.

SUDDENLY ONE OF THE OFFICERS, GULAB SINGH, HAD AN IDEA.

I HAVE BEEN BLESSED WITH THE SAME APPEARANCE AS YOU. LET ME HAVE THE HONOUR OF LAYING DOWN MY LIFE FOR YOU.

BUT—HOW—I DON'T UNDERSTAND.



THE FRONT GATES WERE THEN THROWN OPEN. AS FORESEEN, THE MUGHALS RUSHED IN FORGETTING TO GUARD THE REAR GATE.



MEANWHILE BANDA AND A BAND OF HIS SOLDIERS MADE GOOD THEIR ESCAPE.



MUNULISSARN FELL INTO THE HANDS OF THE MUGHALS AND THEY KILLED AS MANY SIKHS AS THEY COULD.

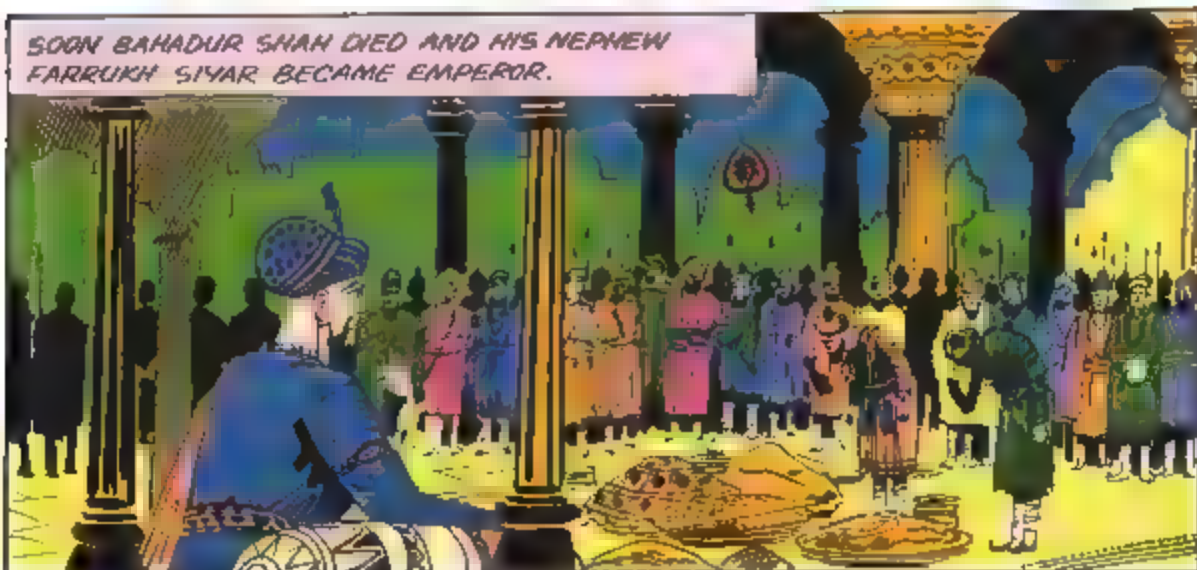
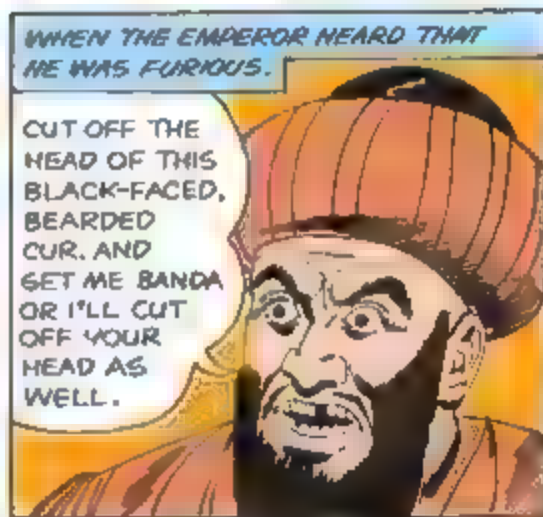
WHERE IS BANDA? TAKE HIM ALIVE. THE EMPEROR WOULD LOVE TO SEE HIS HEAD ROLL OFF.

THERE HE IS!

A RING OF MUGHAL SOLDIERS CLOSED IN AROUND A MAN SEATED ON A STONE.

THAT'S HIM. GET THE BEARDED CUR ALIVE.





THE NEW EMPEROR SUMMONED HIS GENERALS TO HIM.

I CHARGE YOU TO GET BANDA, DEAD OR ALIVE. EXTERMINATE THE SIKHS WHEREVER YOU FIND THEM.



MEANWHILE BANDA'S FOLLOWING OF BANDAI KHALSA BECAME RESTLESS.

OUR GURU SEEMS TO THINK THAT AFTER AVENGING THE MURDERS OF GURU GOBIND SINGH'S FAMILY HIS TASK HAS ENDED. WHAT ABOUT THE TYRANNY OF THE MUGHALS THAT CONTINUES.



BANDA INSTEAD OF CONTINUING THE WAR AGAINST THE TYRANTS AFTER HIS ESCAPE, HAD ALLOWED HIMSELF TO GET CAUGHT IN THE MESHES OF A HOUSEHOLDER'S LIFE. HE MARRIED TWO WIVES AND HAD MANY CHILDREN.



FARRUKH SHAH'S GENERALS SURROUNDED BANDA'S CAMP NEAR GURDASPUR.



BANDA WAS NOT PREPARED FOR THE ATTACK. IT WAS UNEXPECTED.

WHAT SHALL WE DO? THERE IS NO FOOD OR WATER.

THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN ARE STILL WITH US.



IN SPITE OF THE ODDS AGAINST HIM BANDA HELD OUT FOR EIGHT LONG MONTHS. IN ORDER TO SURVIVE THEY WERE FORCED TO EAT THE FLESH OF THEIR OXEN.

I'D RATHER DIE THAN EAT BEEF.

WE MAY REFUSE, BUT WHAT WILL THE CHILDREN DO? I WILL NOT LET MINE DIE.



AT LAST THE MUGHALS RESORTED TO ONE OF THEIR WELL-TRIED RUSES. A MESSENGER WAS SENT TO BANDA'S CAMP.

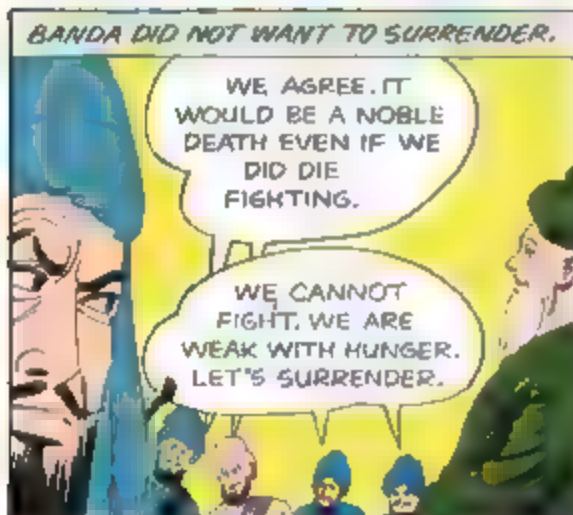
IF YOU SURRENDER, THE EMPEROR PROMISES TO SPARE YOUR LIFE AND THAT OF YOUR FOLLOWERS.



BANDA DID NOT WANT TO SURRENDER.

WE AGREE. IT WOULD BE A NOBLE DEATH EVEN IF WE DID DIE FIGHTING.

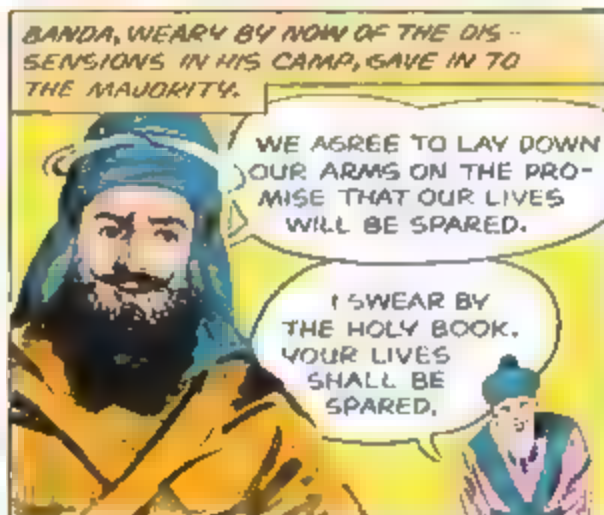
WE CANNOT FIGHT. WE ARE WEAK WITH HUNGER. LET'S SURRENDER.



BANDA, WEARY BY NOW OF THE DISSENSIONS IN HIS CAMP, GAVE IN TO THE MAJORITY.

WE AGREE TO LAY DOWN OUR ARMS ON THE PROMISE THAT OUR LIVES WILL BE SPARED.

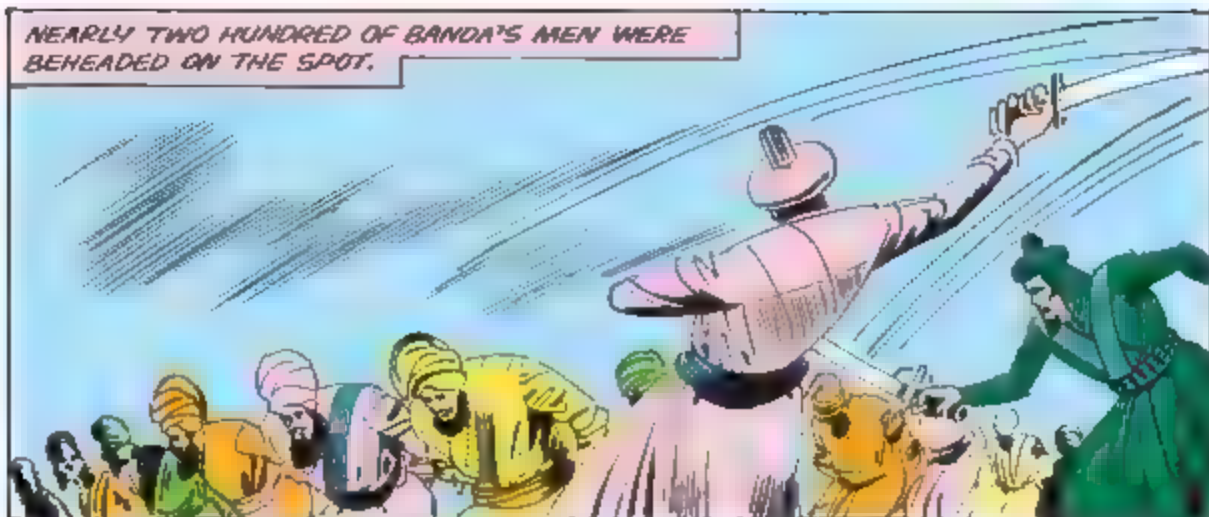
I SWEAR BY THE HOLY BOOK, YOUR LIVES SHALL BE SPARED.



THE MUGHALS HOWEVER HAD NO INTENTION OF HONOURING THEIR WORD.



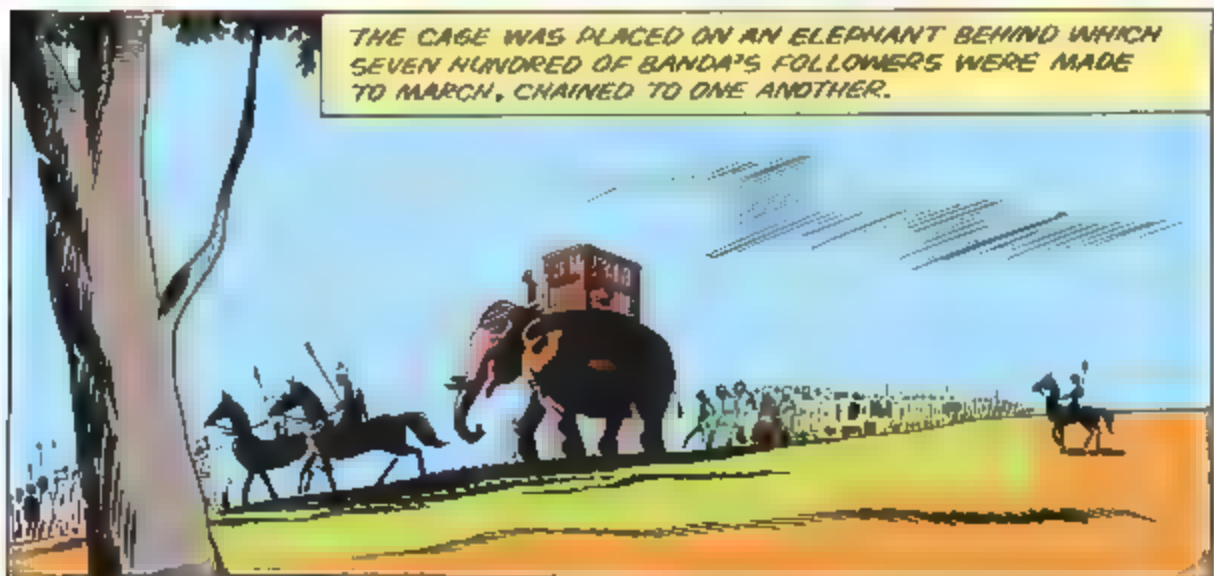
NEARLY TWO HUNDRED OF BANDA'S MEN WERE  
BEHEADED ON THE SPOT.



BANDA WAS PUSHED INTO AN IRON CAGE,  
TO BE TAKEN TO DELHI.



THE CAGE WAS PLACED ON AN ELEPHANT BEHIND WHICH  
SEVEN HUNDRED OF BANDA'S FOLLOWERS WERE MADE  
TO MARCH, CHAINED TO ONE ANOTHER.



O BANDA, WHY  
DON'T YOU PERFORM  
MIRACLES AND  
SAVE YOURSELF?

IN DELHI, BANDA AND HIS MEN WERE PARADED  
THROUGH THE JEERING CROWDS IN THE BAZARS.

FOR THREE MONTHS BANDA AND HIS MEN WERE TORTURED EVERY DAY.



FINALLY THEY WERE TAKEN  
TO MEHRAULI TO BE  
EXECUTED.



BANDA'S FOUR-YEAR-OLD SON WAS BROUGHT BEFORE HIS FATHER.

IF YOU RENOUNCE YOUR FAITH YOUR SON'S LIFE WILL BE SPARED.

BUT Banda ONLY SMILED AND BLESSED HIS SON.

MY SON GO TO YOUR GURU LIKE A BRAVE SIKH.

BANDA'S SON AND SIX HUNDRED OF HIS FOLLOWERS WERE EXECUTED.

ON SUNDAY, JUNE 19, 1716 CAME Banda's TURN.

YOU HAVE A LAST CHANCE. RENOUNCE YOUR GURU AND SAVE YOUR LIFE.

NEVER! I DESERVE THIS FOR STRAYING FROM THE GURU'S PATH.

THE EXECUTIONER TAUNTED HIM.

OR WOULD YOU  
RATHER USE YOUR  
MIRACULOUS POWERS  
AND SAVE YOUR  
LIFE?



## BANDA BAHADUR

Inspired by Guru Gobind Singh, Banda Bahadur led the Sikh rebellion against the Mughal Empire. For eight years, he ravaged the whole of North India. The havoc he created in the Indo-Gangetic plain was of such magnitude that the Mughals could never restore their administration. Invasions by the Persian tyrant Nadir Shah and the Afghan Ahmed Shah Abdali hastened the decline of the once mighty empire which helped the Sikhs to emerge as the rulers of Punjab. Banda Bahadur thus paved the way for the foundation of the Sikh Kingdom.

OTHER ACK **BRAVEHEARTS**:

## RANJIT SINGH



## BAPPA RAWAL



## BAGHA JATIN



## CHANDRA SHEKHAR AZAD



## ALSO LOOK FOR:

## CHANDRAHASA



## ANCESTORS OF RAMA



## THE LEARNED PANDIT



## GURU GOBIND SINGH



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- NARAYAN MURTHY, CHIEF MENTOR, INFOSYS